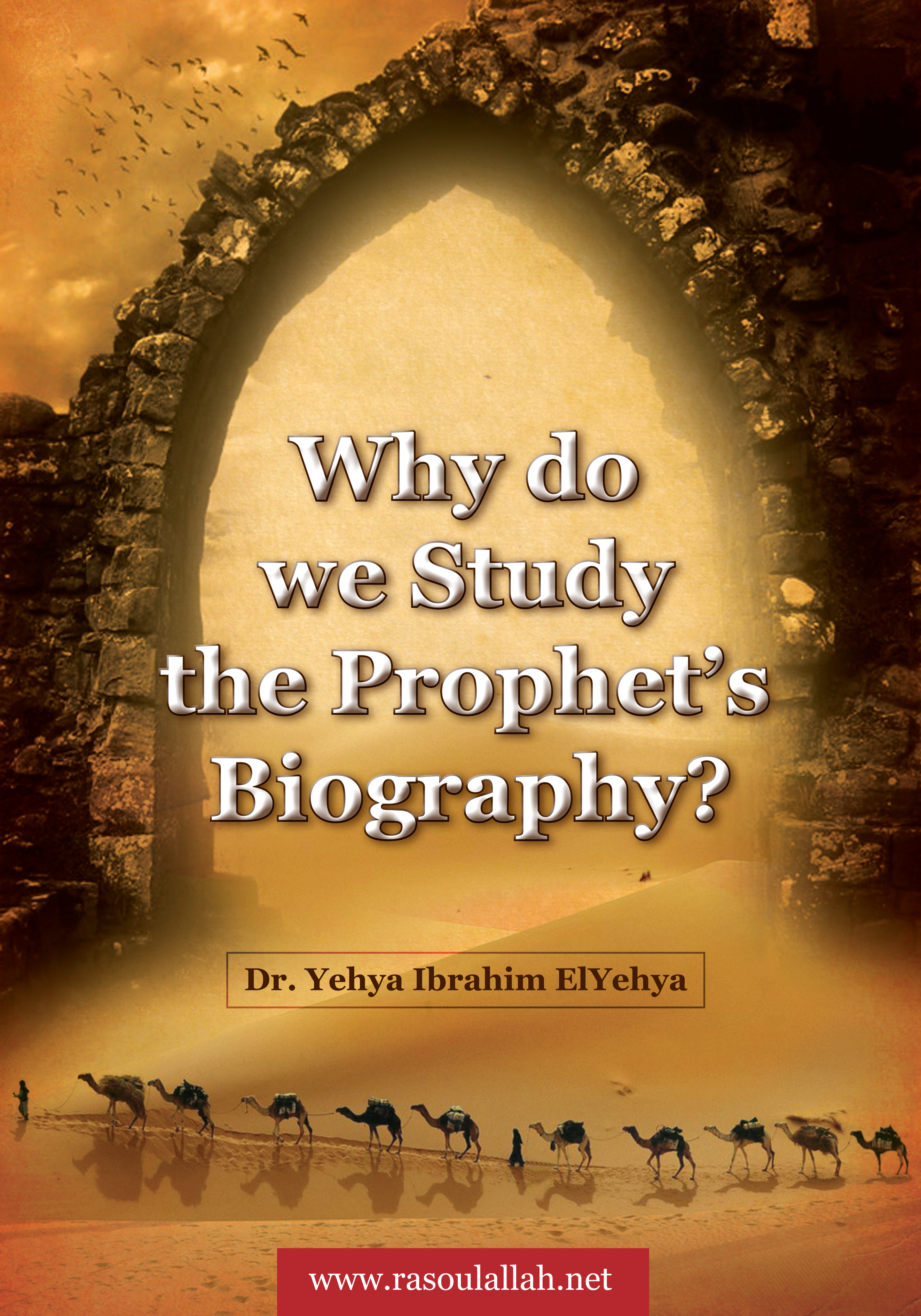
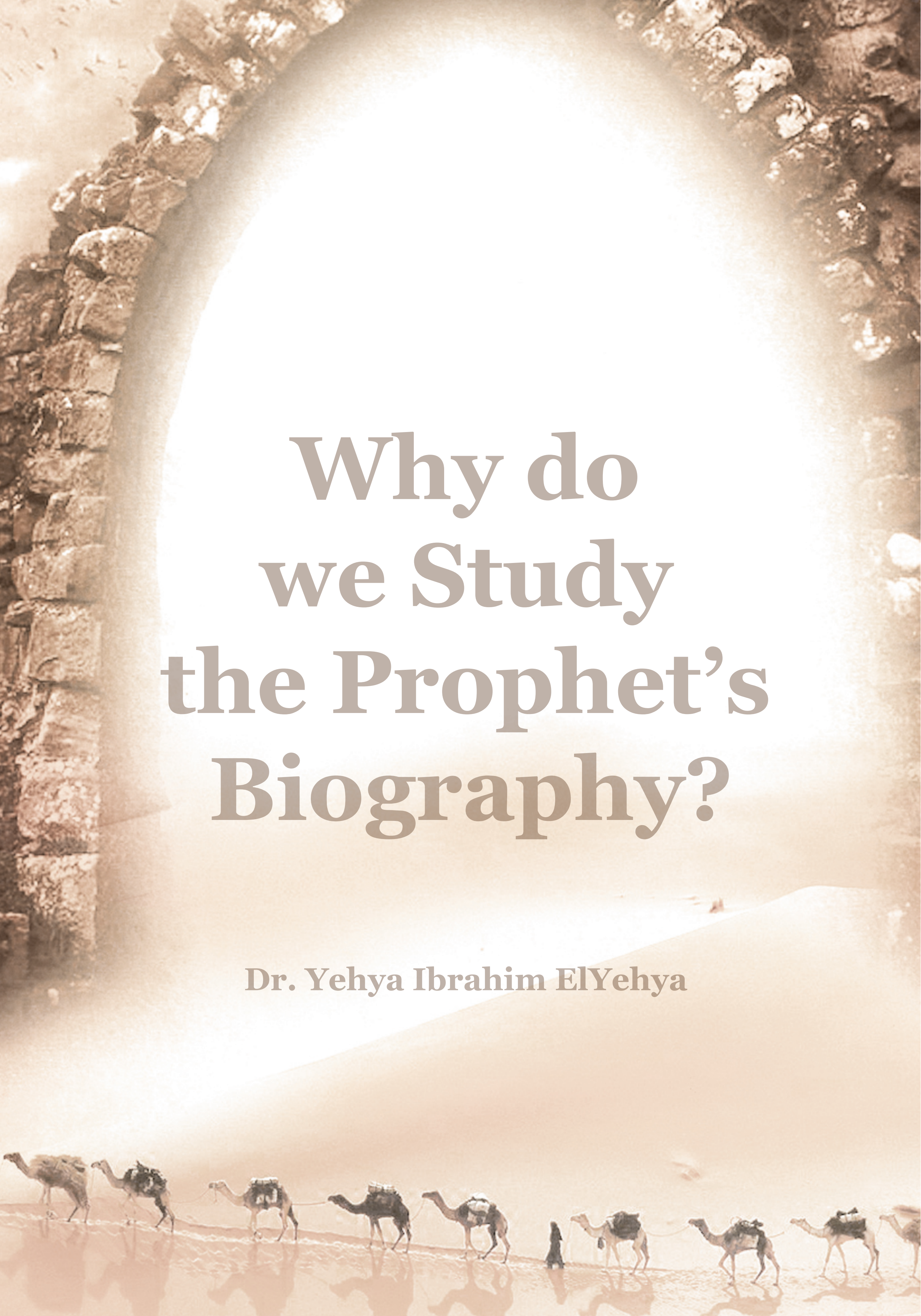


Why do we Study the Prophet's Biography?
Dr. Yehya Ibrahim ElYehya
www.rasoulallah.net


Why do
we Study
the Prophet's
Biography?
Dr. Yehya Ibrahim ElYehya

Contents

He is the Practical Image of Islam

Allah's Messenger (PBUH) is the practical image of Islam. There is no way that one can get to know Islam without knowing Allah's Messenger (PBUH); his guidance, work, instructions and prohibitions.

Allah's Messenger (PBUH) made peace and war, settled and traveled, sold and bought, took and gave. He never lived alone, neither did he travel alone.

Muslims had weakened only because they failed to follow his pattern and guidance for the Almighty Allah said: ﴿*Indeed in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example to follow for him who hopes for (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much*﴾ (Al-Ahzab:21).

Some Muslims went to the extent that they only read his biography (PBUH) during celebrations and forums without following his guidance. Some others read it either for obtaining blessings or for getting familiar with its events; wars, days.....etc.

This happens due to one of two reasons:

First: their ignorance of the principal of following his pattern & guidance (PBUH) and not knowing that this is a necessity for achieving his love.

Second: their failure in perceiving the positions of guidance in his biography due to a weakness in their sense of conclusion or due to their lack of knowledge and readings. Here lies the importance of deriving the lessons and benefits from his biography (PBUH).

The biography of the Prophet (PBUH) is not meant to be taught for the pleasure of reading nor for the knowledge of a certain historic period and not for the love of studying the biographies of the grand and heroes. Such kind of superficial study is performed by non-Muslims. A Muslim should have various aims from studying his biography, among which are;

First: Allah's Messenger (PBUH) is the one to be followed for he is the example for all Muslims:
He is the legislator whom we are instructed to follow, for Allah says: ﴿*Indeed in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example to follow for him who hopes for (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much*﴾ *(Al-Ahzab:21)*; Allah (the Almighty) says ﴿*If you obey him, you shall be on the right guidance*﴾ (Al-Noor:54); Allah also says ﴿*He who obeys the Messenger, has indeed obeyed Allah*﴾ *(Al-Nissa:80).*

And Allah also says ﴿*Say if you really love Allah then follow me, Allah will love you and forgive your sins*﴾ (Al-Imran:31).
He is the practical image and incarnation of Islam without whom we can not possibly know how to obey the Almighty Allah or worship Him.

From his biography the scholars derive the techniques of the Call and its phases. They also get to know the tremendous effort exerted by Allah's Messenger (PBUH) for the sake of raising the word of Allah and how he reacted in facing the hardships and obstacles that faced him.

- From his biography, teachers can derive the methods & techniques of education.
- From his biography, rulers can derive systems and methodology of leadership.
- From his biography, the ascetics can derive the meaning and essence beyond being an ascetic.
- From his biography, traders can derive the aims, systems and methods of trading.
- From it, those who are suffering can learn the highest degrees of patience and persistence, thus their determination can grow stronger and their trust in Allah increases knowing that the result will be finally in their favor.
- From it, the scholars derive knowledge which enables them to better understand the Book of Allah (Al-Quran) and the various sciences of Islam, among which are the abrogating and abrogated verses, the reasons behind the revelation of verses and many other knowledge.
- From it, the whole nation derives the morals, manners and merits.

Ibn Katheer said « a special care and attention must be paid to such type of study (the biography of Allah's Messenger (PBUH)) as it was narrated by Omar Al-Wakedi that Abdullah ibn Omar ibn Ali said that his father heard Ali ibn Al-Hussain saying: «*we used to know the conquests of Allah's Messenger (PBUH) as we know the verses of the holy Quran*».

Al-wakedi said, I heard Mohamed ibn Abdullah saying that he heard his uncle Al-Zuhri saying «*in the science of conquests, lies both the science of life and that of the hereafter.*»

Ismail ibn Mohammed ibn Saad ibn abi Wakkas said « *my father used to teach us the conquests of Allah's Messenger (PBUH) and repeated them to us saying: «these are the glorious deeds of your fathers so waste them not*».

History had witnessed many kings, leaders, poets and philosophers but none of them had left behind such a biography and such pattern to be followed as it is with the Prophet's. History had wiped off all their credit and the only thing left is some of their names.

Biographies of many grand people had turned out to be mere jokes throughout history. Where is Namroud who said to Ibrahim (PBUH) ﴿*I give life and cause death.*﴾ (Al-Baqara:258).

Where is Pharaoh who said: ﴿*I am your lord, most high.*﴾ (Al-nazia'at:24), and what was his destiny» he who also said: ﴿*I know not that you have an ilâh (a god) other than me.*﴾ (AL-Qassas:38).

Those grand people of their ages are now being mocked by everyone; the young and the old, the knowledgeable and the ignorant, for if they had succeeded in deceiving their people at their time, their deception has been revealed and they became a mockery throughout time.

The biography of Allah's Messenger (PBUH) had provided the means for getting the people out of the darkness of polytheism and the corruption of worship to the light of monotheism and faith in Allah (the Almighty) who said: ﴿*O Prophet ! Verily, We have sent you as witness, and a bearer of glad tidings, and a warner And as one who invites to Allah by His Leave, and as a lamp spreading light.*﴾ (Al-Ahzab:45-46).

Second: we study Allah's Messenger (PBUH) biography so that our belief in his honesty may increase:

Knowledge of his miracles and the signs of his prophecy are sure means to increase faith and trust in his honesty (PBUH). The study of his glorious biography and his great attitudes only prove his perfection, loftiness and honesty.

Third: we study his biography in order to have his love deeply entrenched in our hearts:

for what his biography holds as regards his virtuous manners, his generous treatment, his great concern for guiding people to the right path and their welfare, his sacrifice with self and money for the sake of getting people out of the darkness and into the light and from distress to happiness and his great concern in warding off any hardships that may befall his nation.

The Prophet; Your Best Ideal in Life

The Prophet is the best ideal to follow in your life... He is the only personality in history to be followed in everything...

• If you are rich so follow the Prophet when he was a merchant traveling with his products between Hijaz and Ash-Sham and when he earned Bahrain's stores

• If you are poor so take him as an example when he was under blockade in the col (mountain pass) of Abu Taleb and when he emigrated to Madinah leaving his country without having anything...

• If you are a king so follow him in his «Sunna» (All his doings and sayings) when he guided the Arabs and was obeyed by all, even great personalities.

• If you are a weak person so take the Prophet as an example when he was accused in Makkah within the atheist system.

• If you are a conqueror, you can share part of his life when he conquered his enemy in the Battle of Badr, Honayn and Makkah

• If you are defeated, take a moral lesson from the Battle of Uhod when he (PBUH)was among his dead and wounded friends...

• If you are a teacher take him as an example when he taught his companions in the Masjed.

• If you are a student or seeking for more education, follow him (PBUH) when he was sitting between Gabriel's hands learning and understanding his Message...

• If you are an advisor, faithful consulter so listen to him when he advised the people in his Masjed of Madinah...

• If you are an Orphan, you have to know that the Muhammad's father died before his birth and his mother when he (PBUH) was still a child...

• And as for children he was that cute and polite child living his first years with his child-minder Halima Assa'diyah ...

• If you are young so read the biography of the shepherd of Makkah...

• If you are a merchant traveling with some goods, so notice the behaviors of the caravan's leader who went to Busra...

• If you are a judge or evaluator, so look at the Prophet's judgment when he went to Ka'ba and saw the leaders of the tribes about to kill each other because they were struggling about who is the one to put the black stone in its place, and the Prophet -of course- resolved the problem. And also when he was in Madinah judging equally between people no matter if they were rich or poor...

• If you are a husband so read the Prophet's biography about the honest life of Khadijah's and Aisha's husband.

• And if you are a father, so learn how to treat your children as he (PBUH) did with his daughters and grandchildren...

No matter who you are ... you have the Prophet's biography; your guide and candle lightning the darkness of your daily life helping you to go through it to gain the hereafter....

• He is indeed the greatest personality all over the world.

Characteristics & Properties of the Prophet's Biography

First :
It is well known and recorded and none of it is obscure or hidden.

Islamic scholars throughout history have written various books in each and every aspect of the prophet's biography separately including all its details to an extent that enables every Muslim to read his biography (PBUH) to live it to the utmost as a result of its clarity & comprehensiveness.

A detail of this will be mentioned later in the sources of the Prophet's (PBUH) biography. One has to know that the number of the prophet's biography books compiled in Urdu, which is considered a new language, is more than thousand books. The number of books compiled during the same century, 13th, in European languages is above 1300 books.

Second :
It is characterized by truthfulness & honesty in its reporting.

for it had been subjected, similar to Hadith, to all kinds of thorough examination, inspection, comparison and verification of narrators and distinguishing the authentic and the weak of it. Hence, his biography (PBUH) is the most authentic biography reported to humanity.

Third :
His eternal Call (PBUH) is for all creatures.

His biography (PBUH) is a model for all humanity for it has equalized between the common and the nobles. It is a biography that all people can benefit from whether they are adults or children, for they are all equal in front of the Almighty Allah.

Forth :
The Universality of the Call and its Pillar.

Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said: ﴿Prophets used to be sent to their people in particular and I was sent to all humanity﴾. Humanity is always looking forward an ideal to follow and no biography, of a great man or prophet, is as famous and comprehensive as his biography (PBUH).

Any religion that is not based on two main pillars, the rights of Allah and those of people, can not save humanity and lead it to righteousness, survival, happiness and perfection.

Religions now are divided into two main categories:

1. Those who have no indication of the Almighty Allah at all like Buddhism and Chinese religions.

2. Those who believe in the existence of Allah, but do not guide to the way that one can follow to know how to worship Allah or how to know and describe Him, and do not provide any means for the incarnation of such belief.

But concerning the rights of human beings, you wont find when searching through all religions such detailed pictures of family life and social relations, or even political, international & economical aspects, as those provided by Islam & the biography of Allah's Messenger (PBUH).

The Prophet's Manners in his Biography

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) did not live his life among his companions and friends, on the contrary he lived most of it among his bitter enemies, the polytheists. In his last years even though he had Jewish hypocrite neighbors, they were unable to accuse him of any shortcoming in his behavior or honesty despite of their hard search for one. The people of Makkah used to give him bad titles, but they could never defame him or desecrate his honor despite of their spending their money and souls to cause him hardship.

The Almighty Allah said: ﴿*We know indeed the grief which their words cause you .It is not you that they deny, but it is the Verses (the Qur'ân) of Allâh that the Zâlimûn (polytheists and wrong-doers) deny*﴾. (Al-Ana'am 33).

Narrated by Al-Bukhari, Ibn Abbas reported that Allah's Messenger (PBUH) went up Al-Safa hill to deliver his Call and said: ﴾*O people of Makkah; if I told you that there is an army in the valley that wants to attack you, would you believe me? They replied: of course we will, we have always known you to be truthful and honest*﴿.

Fifth :
Its clarity and comprehensiveness of all life aspects.

Allah's Messenger (PBUH) had lived among his companions and married nine women and he ordered that his sayings and deeds must be reported to the whole world,

he said: ﴿I ask Allah to make anyone who reports anything I say as it is, to make his face beautiful and shiny﴾. He also said: ﴿Narrate from me, even if it is one verse﴾. (He never traveled alone and he never stayed away from people and he (PBUH) said: ﴿A narrator may be of more understanding than someone who hears directly﴾.

His companions worked together to narrate to us everything about him, some of them had devoted themselves for narration and following up: such as the people of As-Soffa. They have described how he stands up and sit down, how he sleeps, and how he laughs and smile, the right way in bathing and ablution, how he drinks and eats and what are his favorite food. They have described him as if you see him to the extent that they described the white hairs in his head and beard. One can find wonders of such comprehensiveness and deep details just by having a glimpse on any of his biography books (PBUH).

Sixth :

In its essence and generality it didn't go beyond human ability.

so it didn't rely on marvels, and its aspects didn't depend on fabulous miracles, but it's easy to know and to be applied and followed because it is not difficult to be applied.

Muhammad the Man; Great in Everything

Muhammad (PBUH) the Man was great in everything...
great in all aspects and fields.

Great in his Manners:
«Allah's Messenger (PBUH) was never furious»

«Allah's Messenger (PBUH) never failed to keep his promises»

«Allah's Messenger (PBUH) never took revenge for himself»

«Allah's Messenger (PBUH) never hit a woman»

«Allah's Messenger (PBUH) never lied»

Great in his Political Vision:
He said after Al-Ahzab conquest: ﴿as of today we will invade them, not they us﴾.

Great in his Spirituality:
He used to pray till his feet swell and says: ﴿shouldn't I be a thankful slave to Allah﴾.

Great in his Forgiveness of his Enemies:
﴿Go your way, for you are free men﴾.

Great in Inspiring Hope in the Hearts of People:
Such matter (Islam) will spread like the night and day, to the extent that a woman will go out from her home in Hira to Ka'ba fearing no one but Allah.

Great in his Courage:
When he said on the day of the conquest of Honain: ﴿I am the Prophet no lying, I am the son of Abd Al-Muttaleb﴾.

Great in his Ability of Gathering People around him:
He knew the capabilities of people and used to place everyone of them in the right place...

Great with the Youth:

He used to gather the youth and organize a competition for them in throwing arrows, saying: ﴿Throw o grandsons of Ismael, for your grandfather was a thrower﴾.

He used to organize them in teams and include himself in one of those teams, so his team used to keep on throwing without the others doing the same. He then used to ask them: ﴿why don't you throw?﴾ They replied: *how can we do so while you are one of the other team*. He (PBUH) said: ﴿throw and I am with you all ﴾.

Great in the Eyes of his Wife:

The testimony of Khdija : *«O Allah will never let you down»*.
Wives are the best judges of their husbands and the best knowing their faults.

The Jurisprudence of the Prophet's Biography

The purpose of studying the jurisprudence biography of the Messenger (PBUH) is not just studying of the historical facts or telling funny and exciting stories or incidents. So we should not consider studying the jurisprudence biography of the Messenger (PBUH) a kind of historical study like other studies of the ancient eras or like the studies of the biographies of the caliphs, because the purpose of studying the jurisprudence biography of Muhammad (PBUH) is to enable Muslims understanding the reality of Islam throughout the life of the Prophet after understanding the principles and rules of Islam as an abstract model in his mind. So studying the jurisprudence biography of the Messenger (PBUH) is nothing but a practical action that purposes to embody the perfect reality of Islam in its highest model "Muhammad" (PBUH). If we want to divide and classify this purpose, we can point it in these following specific targets:

1. Understanding the personality of Muhammad the Messenger throughout his life and conditions he lived in to make sure that Muhammad (PBUH) was not enabled from taking the lead of his people by his own genius, but he was the Messenger who was supported by the inspiration and care given by the Almighty Allah.

2. To make everyone able to find his highest model in all life details to regulate his life, and there wont be anyone higher as a model than the Muhammad (PBUH) as Allah made of him the role model for all human beings: ﴿Indeed in the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much﴾. (Al Ahzab:21)

3. Studying the Prophet's Biography helps people to understand the Quran as there are many verses interpreted by reading the conditions around the Messenger and his reactions in return.

4. Reading and studying the biography of Muhammad (PBUH) helps Muslims to gain a large amount of knowledge and Islamic information whether this information is about religion, rules of Islam or manners. This (Biography) is the best symbol of the principles and rules of Islam.

5. We can elicit all the five targets from the Prophet's life and biography because during his life he passed through all the human and social experiences which we can find in any independent person or any active member in society. His life (PBUH) sets the perfect role model for the straight young man in his honest manners with his people and friends, and sets also the wonderful role model for the person who calls for Allah gently and wisely and does his best just for fulfilling his message, and sets an example of the genius leader who deals with conditions intelligently and wisely. He also sets the highest role model for the ideal husband and kind father in his gentle manners. He sets also the role model for the genius commander, honest wise politician and the Muslim who combines accurately between the duties of his worship and his gentle funny dealings with his family and friends.

The Scientific Method in Representing the Prophet's Biography

Writing the Prophet's biography is called in general "history"; it supports recording the past events which happened serially. This serial order was the scientific basis depended in writing and recording biography.

So the writers and scholars of the Prophet's biography were recording the correct biography depending on an accurate scientific base; following the right source and the well known narrator in transmitting the hadith (the Prophet's sayings and actions) exactly as it was told by the Prophet (PBUH).

Faithfully they wrote these events without involving their thoughts or psychological impressions or even doing any modifications.

They saw that the historical event being known from very accurate scientific bases must be a very clear, holy reality. They also saw that it is an unforgivable dishonesty when an empowered governor might remove any event from this biography according to his own beliefs. But the biography of the Prophet (PBUH) is protected according to the bases and fundamentals of the scientific studies. The biography saved the whole story of the Prophet since his birth passing by his childhood which shows the superb miracles, also the inspiration phenomena and it also shows that his ethics and honesty let him obey Allah in peace and in war, and the Quran and Sunna (the Prophet's sayings and actions) witness that.

So history really saved his biography from any irregularity.

Contriving the results, verdicts and principles from this biography does not relate to the recording of the history any more. It is considered a scientific job and depends on a separate system which is a distinguished scientific independent work.

Many rules and verdicts can be contrived according to these scientific bases concerning the belief and certitude and some others concerning legislation and the conduction.

The most important thing here is to assure again that this contrivance was completely independent from recording history, it was based on the scientific basis resulted from a scientific struggling and effort as history recording that was based on these scientific rules.



رسول الله
www.rasoulallah.net